

SPECIAL EDITION

# THE BEACON

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 124TH FIGHTER WING

April 2020



COMBAT EXCELLENCE-ALWAYS ON MISSION



# From the WING COMMANDER

124th Fighter Wing Commander Col. Shannon Smith



## Choices

This special edition of the Beacon is devoted to the resiliency of the National Guard as an enduring symbol of hope, strength and courage for our nation. Through that lens, this Beacon focuses on messages from our leaders.

In these unprecedented times, the guard will again stand resolute in our service to our communities and our commitment to our federal mission. We are doing both today and we'll do both tomorrow - for a better tomorrow. Never forget that you are distinguished by your ability to serve, and most importantly, THAT YOU SERVE. We will be stronger for this, and the nation will look back on these times with reverence for how we all came together to overcome. I stand in awe of all of you, honored to serve with each of you, my citizen-Airmen brothers and sisters.

We have choices.

We have a choice in how we respond in times of crisis. I'm confident that you have heard of the "fight or flight" response. It's a way to describe how we harness the surge of adrenaline that is experienced when faced with crisis. We can tailor our response through training

and experience. The military is a great example of this. As a pilot, I was trained from the beginning to handle aircraft emergencies in a certain way: (1) maintain aircraft control, (2) analyze the situation and (3) take the proper action. Maintain Control - Analyze - Act ... We can choose to do this. As leaders at all levels, we can choose to lead with composure, confident to act quickly and decisively when the threat warrants, and with wisdom to pause, and seek counsel and guidance when the decision space is availed to us.

We can choose our team. Over the last few weeks, I have witnessed our leadership team (group commanders, command chief and superintendents) grapple with an unprecedented threat that respects no boundaries. As a team, we have rallied and rebelled, struggled and thrived, and found moments of exhilaration and utter frustration, all in an effort to do the right thing - To Ensure Mission Success, Protect our Force, and Preserve Capability. This leadership team has challenged me every day in a good way. They have challenged me to question my position, to dig deeply into my assumptions and, most importantly, to

continue to lead ... despite a lack of answers. This pandemic reveals very few answers. Yet, here we are. I would choose no other leadership team!

We can choose to persevere. We can choose to sacrifice our freedoms to "flatten the curve." We can choose to face the unknown with our chin up and chest out, looking left and right at our brothers and sisters in arms (six feet apart) knowing that we're stronger together, even when together means something different today.

What do you choose in these times of strife?

I choose to lead every day. I choose to gather my family close and reassure them in our faith that there is a plan, there is hope, and this too will pass.

I choose to lead every day. I choose to gather my guard family close and reassure them that in our service in a profession of arms to our state and the nation there is a plan, there is hope and this too will pass.

*Col Smith*

# From the Command Chief

124th Fighter Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Kelly Bongiovi



I hope this message finds you and your families safe and healthy. With all our planning, training and practicing in mind, these last few weeks we have found we can “virtually” overcome anything. You all are doing amazing in keeping constant communication and keeping our processes and procedures moving forward. Yes, things have slowed down, but as we continue to practice our social distancing and teleworking we will get better and better in what has become the unusual normal.

I know there are questions on everyone’s mind. Like, how are we going to pay our SGLI/SSLI or Tricare Reserve Select? Will tuition assistance be affected during this crisis? Am I going to be called to State Active Duty? Rest assured that we are working on these particular questions and many more as they come to us. Please keep asking because all of your questions are important and will lead us to even more issues that will need to be resolved. There are no stupid questions, so just ask.

We have talked about resiliency a lot this past year. However, few of us have been in situations that required us to practice what we have learned. Now, we

are all in the same situation together and it will take all of us to lean on our training and practice these skills. Practice the skill of watching out for your family members, your wingmen, your neighbors and your community. Practice the skill of being someone to lean on and don’t be afraid of asking for someone to lean on if necessary. Reach out to your support teams, chiefs, first sergeants or supervisors for assistance if you need it. Be flexible, patient and keep your sense of humor. We all need it right now!

As military members, we should recognize this is not our traditional role. We are used to being the ones on the frontline taking whatever risks necessary to win battles. It’s not natural for us to sit still and have to wait for someone to do things for us. Trust me when I say you are being responsible by listening to your leadership, doing what is asked and continuing to support our civilian heroes, healthcare professionals, teachers and grocery store clerks etc. Staying healthy is the absolute right thing to do, so when our community is ready for us to engage in this crisis, we are completely combat ready for our state or federal mission.

This is a lot of new territory for all of us and a great deal

to take in, but I am proud to say that I see all of you staying focused on combat readiness. During the past few weeks, I have found myself being inspired by all the innovation and creativity that I am seeing throughout the 124th Fighter Wing. It reminds me how lucky I am to be working with some of the finest professionals in the United States Air Force. My prayers remain with you and your families, and remember to be resilient, be patient and be kind to each other.

*Thank you!*  
*Chief*

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### WING COMMANDER

Col. Shannon Smith

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Capt. Rebecca Solosabal

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPERINTENDENT

Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Senior Airman Joseph Morgan

Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

Airman 1st Class Taylor Walker

Mr. Ryan White\*

\*April Beacon editor

## ON THE COVER

Idaho National Guard Airmen are helping at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in a time of need. Food is donated to pantries like St. Vincent de Paul from the Idaho Foodbank and several local companies as part of the Feed America program. Tech. Sgt. Mario Pile from the 124th Fighter Wing helped by unloading food from trucks, sorting the food into carts and helping load the donated food into people's cars that came by for their grocery needs on April 3, 2020.



The Idaho National Guard is helping at the pick-up station at St. Vincent de Paul because the need for more manpower increased as more people were coming for food. The call for the Idaho National Guard came through the Idaho Office of Emergency Management from the Idaho Foodbank to help with a shortage of support during the hardship of COVID-19. Currently they are handing out food to anyone that shows up during the pantry's pick-up hours. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur)

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Photo by Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

# I Got Robbed

I've really wanted to see a tornado and feel an earthquake in my time. So I was disappointed, that while in Alabama a few years back, the issued tornado warning never materialized into the real thing. And then again, on March 31 at 5:52 p.m., I missed out on likely my best shot of experiencing an earthquake. I got robbed again!

My "earthquake" was relegated to little more than a moment of confusion. Standing in the yard, I watched the neighbors spill out of their house with a ruckus, followed by my wife yelling "EARTHQUAKE" from our house. Understanding that my wife's tolerance for excitement is low, my first un-vocalized words were the equivalent of an eye-roll. Heck, her smartwatch-heart monitor commends her on her "work-out" whenever I drive through traffic. However, quickly making the connection with the neighbor's excitement, I decided to trot toward the house. Once there, the evidence clearly leaned in the direction of some significant "shakage." The lights were still swinging and several things were displaced. While the event had quickly passed, my wife was still pacing and talking excitedly about the previous 10 seconds. Oddly, what was a real "event" to her was a "missed opportunity" for me. As a result, my posture stood in contrast to her animated response, and each thought the other was more than a little off target. A small difference in position translated to a huge gap in our perspectives.

Recognizing the difference in perspectives during that 10 seconds is very relevant to the current, more pervasive problem of COVID-19 we are all coping with. Is your perspective that of a student, deployer, family member, caretaker or high-risk group? Maybe you fit in multiple categories or just one or two. Each correlate to concerns of uncertainty as well as the safety of our families and friends. Regardless of how you are coping, we should all try to understand the perspectives of those around us and, more importantly, the driving factors behind them. As a team, we can practice looking beyond the responses of anxiety, calm, disappointment and grief etc., and simply listen to what it is others are having to process. And whether it is in line with our perspective or drastically different, the empathy we show one another will go a long way in keeping our team strong through this and any future adversity - as they are sure to come.

Scenarios will change, but the truths of the "wingman concept" and "resiliency" will not. So the next time someone yells EARTHQUAKE, when the world around you appears calm, suppress the eye-rolls and any derogatory thoughts, and consider they may be operating with a different piece of information. Then as a teammate and wingman, determine what you can do to help keep others healthy and moving forward.

*-124th Fighter Wing Vice Commander Col. Eric Newman*



## A MESSAGE FROM FAMILY PROGRAMS

At its core, the mission of the Family Programs Office is to take care of members and their families at home and while abroad. We are in unprecedented times due to the pandemic outbreak of COVID-19. Schools have been closed, businesses have shuttered their doors, many have been laid off work – and to top things off we have asked our members to be ready to leave at a moment's notice, whether overseas or helping the community on state active duty. What was supposed have been a stressful time for just a portion of the wing has rapidly become taxing for the entire population.

A month ago I tasked our deployers with being "proactive" by taking care of as much as possible prior to leaving so that families left behind were not feeling the brunt of their absence. I now challenge every guard member with that same task because we never know when we might be asked to answer our nation's call.

This is where my office is ready and able to assist. Do not suffer in silence. There are resources available to help members and their families through this difficult time – whether through interest-free emergency assistance loans, grants, job opportunities or counseling services. We are ready and able to help 24/7. Please do not hesitate to reach out. Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one only remembers to turn on the light. The Airman and Family Readiness Office is standing by to be your light during this time of uncertainty and darkness.

Stay safe. Be ready. And may the force be with you.

-Heather Echols

For additionally support, please contact Mrs. Heather Echols at 208-513-3430 or send an email to [heather.l.echols.mil@mail.mil](mailto:heather.l.echols.mil@mail.mil).





# Fighting The Invisible Enemy

Photo by Senior Airman Mercedes Wilds

As I write this, I and other traditional guardsmen are trying to come to terms with an unprecedented threat to the well-being of our population. Some of us are on the frontlines of a new battle against a largely invisible, lethal and insidious enemy. My ER physician colleagues are battling this contagion on a daily basis, putting themselves and their families in harm's way to continue to deliver the care we as a people are accustomed to expect. Our nursing colleagues bravely put themselves in the middle of the fight, as they have so selflessly done all their working lives. The physicians assistants, surgeons and other members working to re-purpose professionally and compassionately in non-traditional roles are scrambling to make sense of our roles in this new fight.

And it's a fight. The enemy is inside the wire. There is no respite, no refuge and no place for us to hide. We healthcare providers and professionals recognize that we are most likely to be infected at our place of work doing what we love, putting our lives and health at risk, as well as putting the lives and well-being of our loved ones at risk. I know that I can speak for my colleagues and friends when I say we will do our best to continue to deliver the care that we can to our fellow citizens and guardsmen.

There is no one better than us to fight this fight. We, here in Idaho, anticipate that the surge seen elsewhere is coming, delayed perhaps by our geographical isolation and lower population density. Please do not let your guard down. Isolate yourselves, wash your hands, be honest and open about your symptoms and avail yourselves of the testing capacity of the system as it develops. Remember us in your thoughts and prayers as we tackle this challenge in the best tradition of healthcare professionals in the Idaho Air National Guard.

**Report all symptoms of the COVID-19 for you and your immediate family to our 124 MDG COVID hotline at 208-422-5369. This is necessary for us to be able to keep a positive pulse on the wellness for our guard family and your health needs. Also, do not hesitate to call this hotline if you have coronavirus questions. We are here for you and Stronger Together!**

*-124th Medical Group Commander Lt. Col. Stephen Jones*

# What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



CS 314937-A 03/20/2020

**[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://cdc.gov/COVID19)**



# Idaho COVID-19

[coronavirus.idaho.gov](https://coronavirus.idaho.gov)



## GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNOR BRAD LITTLE'S STATEWIDE STAY-HOME ORDER

Updated March 25, 2020

### Self-isolate

ALL residents of Idaho must self-isolate and stay and work from home as much as possible, unless you work in healthcare, public safety or an identified "essential business" as defined in order.

Residents can leave homes to obtain or provide essential services.

People at higher risk (over 65 and/or health-compromised) should avoid leaving their homes.

Employers that do not provide essential services as defined in order must take all steps necessary for employees to work remotely from home.

### "Essential" facilities & services open

Grocery stores, healthcare facilities, gas stations, pharmacies, essential state and local government functions, laundromats/laundry services, financial institutions, residential and home-based care, veterinary services, hardware stores, limited child care for essential workers, infrastructure, and other businesses essential to the safety and well-being of the residents as defined in the order remain open. Restaurants open but only for drive-thru, carry-out, or delivery.

### "Non-essential" facilities & services closed

Includes indoor gyms, recreational facilities, nightclubs, bars, entertainment venues, convention centers, hair and nail salons, public events and gatherings, dine-in restaurants (drive-thru, carry-out, delivery to continue), and other facilities and services not included in "essential" businesses as defined in order.

### Limit public transit

Only to provide or obtain essential services.

### Limit travel

All non-essential travel must cease.

### No gatherings

Limit all non-essential gatherings of any number of individuals outside the household.

### Outdoor activity OK

Outdoor activity is not prohibited but residents are encouraged to keep distance of 6-feet from others not in their household.

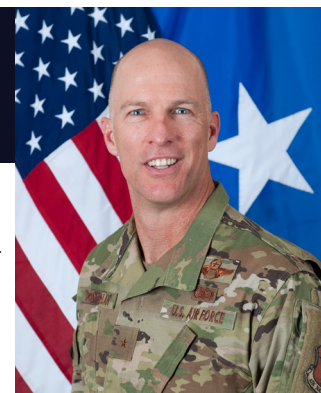
### Practice good hygiene

Wash hands, clean high touch surfaces, cover coughs and sneezes, and do not shake hands.

*Order in effect Wednesday, March 25, 2020, and will remain in effect for at least 21 days  
Governor Little and public health officials will reassess before end of 21-day period  
Final Statewide Stay-Home Order available at [coronavirus.idaho.gov](https://coronavirus.idaho.gov)*

## From the COMMANDER, IDAHO AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Assistant Adjutant General, Air Brig. Gen. Tim Donnellan



Warriors of the IDANG-

The events of the last three weeks have been unprecedented, to say the least. America, as a whole, has demonstrated a level of resiliency many in the world thought we no longer possessed. In just three short weeks, we saw almost every American get the information regarding COVID-19, process it, then do exactly what their elected officials asked them to do. The response varied from state to state, county to county ... but almost all communities are coming to the same conclusion - STAY HOME unless there is a need for essential items and mission essential movement. The team spirit and cooperation is inspiring and brings us to the core of what makes America unique; Americans come together in times of adversity and make it happen!

This is the tough reality - the rapid and near complete shutdown of our economy, culture and way of life has developed at such a fast rate that many feel numb and stunned. It was a shock to us all at first, but as we settle into the new normal it's now time for us to act. There is much to be concerned about with COVID-19, but just like a car accident victim goes through the stages of surprise, shock, disorientation and action, we are no different. However, it's time for us to rely on all aspects of our National Guard culture to do the "action" piece. The IDANG and IDARNG are uniquely suited to take action in support of our state mission.

Our roots lie in our Constitution and our authority lies in USC T32, allowing us to use those valuable lessons and training from our federal mission and apply them to our state mission at the time and place of our governor's choosing. All of you are ready to act, and as the calls have come in, many of you have already answered. I couldn't be more proud of our Airmen as I am during this pandemic.

The problem set for the IDANG encompasses three priorities - staying mission ready for our deployment (which we still expect to do), maintaining the health of our force and families (following CDC, DOD and command guidance) and supporting our civil authorities (state missions when they come). It is complex to balance all three but not impossible. We don't choose which of the three we'll do - our task at hand is to do them all, using risk mitigation as our primary weapon. I ask each of you to do what is asked of you while also thinking of the problems your supervisor or commander is trying to solve. Be an Airman, but think like an NCO - be a SNCO but think like a Chief. Commanders, keep the intent of the commander above you while you're solving the issues of your own organizations. Keep the objectives simple and in line with our priorities - if you're scheduled to deploy, plan on deploying; if you're not planning to deploy, be ready for a state mission. If we stick to that principle we can handle anything

that comes our way.

We have always moved out as one team, focused on a single objective. Those objectives are situational in nature but we have always been left with a good feeling about ourselves and the IDANG. This COVID-19 is no different - someday it will be over and we will only have the memory of how we handled it. If IDANG history is any indication, we'll come out of this experience stronger and more effective than ever before. Continue to check in on one another. Work questions and issues through your chain of command and be prepared (physically, mentally and professionally) to move out when the order comes. A month ago, I didn't know what today would look like, and I'm pretty confident that today I can't even guarantee what tomorrow will bring. In the end, it doesn't matter because what I do know is that we have each other, we're ready and this is what we are trained to do. Every Airman matters and every Airman has a role to play - stay in touch with each other and stay engaged. I know we'll get through this if we do it together, just like everything else we've done.

**Be safe, be healthy, and be ready.**

*Attack!*  
*Donut*





THE ADJUTANT GENERAL, IDAHO  
IDAHO MILITARY DIVISION  
4040 WEST GUARD STREET  
BOISE, ID 83705-5004

April 2020



To the Soldiers and Airmen of the Idaho National Guard,

*"Never was so much owed by so many to so few."* These were the words of Winston Churchill in reference to the heroic efforts of the British Royal Air Force against the German Luftwaffe during the Battle of Britain. Eighty years have passed since the prime minister delivered this speech to the citizens of Great Britain as they braced for a German invasion. Yet, in my opinion, this message remains equally meaningful and relevant today for all of you who serve in the Idaho National Guard.

In a time when less than one percent of Americans serve in the military, it is you, the "few," members of our Idaho National Guard, who are willing and able to step forward and bravely face any threat to our nation. Whether in a foreign land to defeat an enemy force in combat, or providing aid to our fellow citizens facing a crisis here in the homeland, the citizens of Idaho and our nation can always take comfort in knowing you remain vigilant and prepared for any mission.

America is currently engaged in a monumental effort to combat this global pandemic which leaves illness, death, anxiety and fear in its wake. Like every challenge this nation has ever faced, we will prevail, and we will emerge stronger and better.

It is your readiness and willingness to step forward and contribute to this current fight, and any fight we find ourselves engaged in, that sets you apart and makes you members of the "few."

With sincere appreciation and respect for each you and your families,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael J. Garshak".

Michael J. Garshak  
Major General  
The Adjutant General/Commander, IDNG

# Maintain Readiness



Warriors of the Ops Group –

Photo by Senior Airman Mercedee Wilds

Thank you for your patience, resilience and tireless dedication during these challenging times. While some of you are extending your ongoing combat tours downrange, others eagerly anticipate the announcement of a revised timeline for the aviation/maintenance package and follow-on Air Support Operations Squadron and RCP deployments. Meanwhile, we're all striving to stay healthy and take care of our families while we maintain readiness and prepare for mobilization/deployment. We will succeed in these efforts because of you, our greatest resource – so we need to focus on our current No. 1 mission, protecting our Airmen.

What can each of us do right now to accomplish that mission?

1. First and foremost, follow CDC/WHO and the guidelines of competent authorities for public health. Social distancing and the other measures we're taking are working, so keep it up.
2. Check in with each other. Communication is more difficult when we're geographically separated, but stressful times call for more communication, not less. When you talk with your supervisor/commander, give them any questions or concerns you have so we can get you answers and/or help as soon as possible. Commanders and supervisors – don't wait for people to tell you about problems; actively seek out inputs to address challenges early.
3. Stay focused. Our top priority is keeping yourself and your family healthy, but we also need to maintain a sufficient level of readiness to deploy. While there are many unknowns, we do have enough information to stay ready and healthy for the future fight.
4. Maintain a positive mental attitude. Without question, we are in stressful and uncertain times. We also have some unique opportunities. More time at home is a good thing. Also, our wing is making huge strides in innovation with reduced manning mission execution and distributed communication.

I know each of you is up to the mighty challenge at hand. Thank you again for your dedicated service. It is truly an honor to serve with you in these amazing times. **Attack!**

*-124th Operations Group Commander Col. Matthew McGarry*



# AMERICAN AIRMAN

My fellow Airmen, thank you for taking the time to read this edition of the Beacon. The COVID-19 global pandemic has certainly turned our way of life upside down. Additionally, it has thoroughly altered you and your family's deployment battle rhythm. Some of our Airmen may be out of work or some are watching loved ones fight through the symptoms of the coronavirus. There is certainly cause for anxiety and stress for all of us. One thing I have found in times of crisis and uncertainty is a need to anchor myself on principles I hold dear. Many of you will find calm in spiritual guidance or within your family values. However, if you are looking for something to grasp on to while everything around you seems to be changing, let me offer up something you have already pledged yourself to but may not have thought about recently ... The Airman's Creed.

**I am an American Airman. I am a warrior. I have answered my nation's call.**

This phrase starts out each sentence and should carry tremendous weight for how you act, how you treat others and the expectation that you will answer your nation's and state's call to service. Now more than ever, our population looks to the military for strength, courage and calm.

**I am an American Airman. My mission is to fly, fight, and win. I am faithful to a proud heritage, a tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor.**

Your mission is more than to project force wherever called to do so. Your mission is to protect yourself, your family, your fellow Idahoans, and to fight for what is right and fight to win! Whatever called you into service, be proud in the fact that you have chosen to stand tall in the face of adversity, and chosen to march into the battle and not away from it.

**I am an American Airman, guardian of freedom and justice, my nation's sword and shield, its sentry and avenger. I defend my country with my life.**

We all took a pledge to fight for freedom, to support our constitution and support the American way of life. We must embrace that we are in a figurative and literal fight for our way of life, at home and abroad. It is our responsibility to report for duty and succeed in the endeavors asked of us by our governor and president. It is in the hardest of times when we are asked to embrace our core value of service before self.

**I am American Airman: wingman, leader, warrior. I will never leave an Airman behind, I will never falter, and I will not fail.**

Now more than ever, we must look after one another, reach out to your loved ones and our guard family members. You may be the voice of reason and assurance that is needed. Leave no Airman behind, ensure all are informed and aware of resources available to them. We must not fail in this responsibility.

It is my true honor to serve alongside each and every one of you. It is sobering for me to come to grips with the fact that some of our Airmen are facing serious challenges. If you find yourself in that position, please reach out to someone. **DO NOT SUFFER IN SILENCE!!** The Idaho Air National Guard is a family 1,200 strong. Now more than ever, we need to look after one another and help where we can.

*-124th Maintenance Group Commander Col. Chad Kornburg*



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joshua Allmaras

I saw a cartoon the other day of March coming in like a cute little lion and going out like a wild apocalyptic four-headed dragon. I relate to this sentiment ... sometimes life throws us unexpected events for which we could not have foreseen or planned. We have a choice on how we respond to these events. My initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic was FEAR of getting sick or someone in my family getting sick, not enough beds at the hospitals to support the need, or worse yet, not enough critical ventilators that might be required to save my life or someone I care about. These are very real and valid fears but NOT something facing me today. Is there anything we can do about the number of hospital beds or ventilators in the State of Idaho? Nope. What do we have control over? We can wash our hands for 20 seconds, not touch our eyes/nose/mouth, cover our cough/sneeze, minimize the number of trips out of our houses, telework from home, and take care of ourselves by eating healthy, exercising and getting good sleep. They sound like such simple things, but if we do them, we can make a difference.

FEAR is a real thing, something I have had to come to terms with over the last seven years. Last September, I shared about my fight back from Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome in 2013. If you google ARDS, you will find it's very similar to COVID-19. My lungs stopped oxygenating my blood. When I showed up in the emergency room, my oxygen level was at 82%. Many of the patients that die from COVID-19 are dying from ARDS. There's about a 36-52% mortality rate from ARDS, and it requires a major amount of supportive care. (Things like frequent respiratory therapy, constant supervision by pulmonologist and critical medical supplies already in short supply, like ventilators.) ARDS wreaks havoc on your lungs, and can damage other major organs. I was one of the lucky ones. I lost 25% of my lung capacity, but my heart, brain, kidneys and digestive system are good. Here's the thing ... I was otherwise very healthy. When I got sick, I was training for a triathlon and eating a very strict paleo diet. Many of the doctors and nurses think part of why I survived was because I had taken such good care of myself before I got sick. I'm begging you to please take care of yourself during these uncertain times and focus on the things you do have control over.

Your Mission Support Group is here to support you. We are running the group with only mission essential personnel on base, but many others are just a phone call away. Force Support Squadron can still make IDs or update DEERS in emergencies and is ready to help process people onto state active duty. Your communications focal point is operating to support the growing need of teleworkers and virtual meeting platforms. Logistics is fueling planes, supplying aircraft parts and processing OCP uniforms through the warehouse. The Installation Deployment Office is tracking changes with the deployment and communicating these changes through your chain of command and Unit Deployment Managers. The Civil Engineer Squadron is keeping our facilities safe through our critical custodial staff, the operations team and our fire fighters who are here to respond to medical and fire emergencies. Contracting continues to procure resources and services to meet the needs of our Wing. Last, but not least, our defenders are on the front lines, standing post at the gates and keeping watch over Gowen Field in the midst of this crisis. If you need something from the MSG, please reach out through your chain of command; we are still here to provide first class support. **STRONGER TOGETHER!**

*-124th Mission Support Group Commander Lt. Col. Elizabeth Sumner*





## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN CORPS

Airmen and Families of the 124th Fighter Wing, this year has proven so far to be a year of change and unpredictability. Yet, this is the type of environment we train for and I believe we are well prepared to execute the mission. The coronavirus has caused us to change the ways we work, socialize and even exercise. The popular term that this virus has created is "social distancing," and it has changed the ways that we interact with others. A Forbes article interviewed former astronauts on how to cope with isolation, social distancing and spending life in small confined areas – everything we experience on deployment.

### See the Bigger Picture and Set Realistic Expectations

We can't look out the space station window and look down at earth but we can pause, reflecting on what is important in our lives and determine to stay focused on what matters. Make it a priority daily to ensure you are seeing the bigger picture for your family and the mission.

### Stay Busy, Keep your Mind, Body and Spirit Active

What better time than now to start a new project, learn new skills, finish up a college degree or train to max your PT test? Using your mind and body is also necessary for maintaining mental and physical health and lowering the risk of some mental health issues. Use this time to exercise and strengthen your faith. Today is a great time to start!

### Do things to Help Each Other and Keep Spirits Up

This should be easy for Airmen – service before self. One easy way to help and serve others during this time is by expressing gratitude. Positive psychology suggests two ways people can express gratitude: Being gracious for the present (enjoying and being thankful for the present time). And being grateful for what's to come (stay hopeful and optimistic about the future – giving thanks can make you happier). Doing this not only helps others but it helps us keep our spirits up.

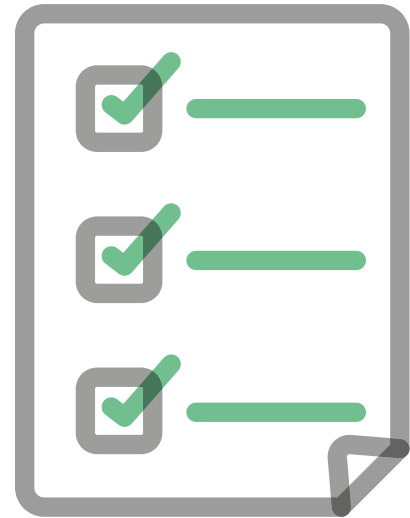
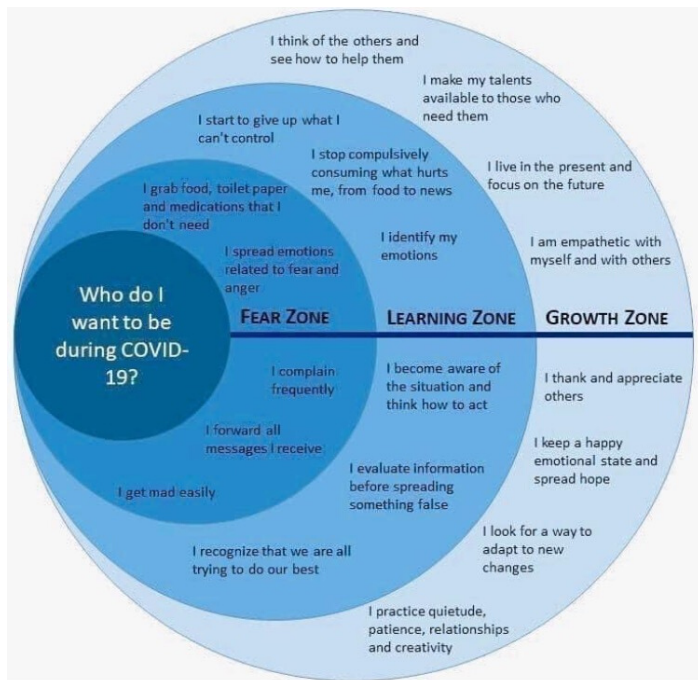
### Keep Channels of Communication Open

For those of us old enough to remember overseas travel without email, FaceTime and text messages – today's technology makes communication too easy. Let's take advantage of it! Make sure we are communicating with our families, friends and our fellow Airmen. I have heard countless stories of how a quick phone call or text message came at exactly the right time to help someone through a difficult time. Also, call someone when you need help – keep the channels of communication open. The 124th FW Chaplain Corps is here to support you and your families.

-Chaplain Howarth

For additional chaplain support or to talk with a chaplain call Ch Duane Pooley at 208-841-9720 or send an email to [duane.j.pooley.mil@mail.mil](mailto:duane.j.pooley.mil@mail.mil). If you are unable to reach Ch Pooley please contact Ch Ian Howarth at 541-519-9420.

## A MESSAGE FROM DPH



While the Idaho Air National Guard is preparing for deployment, the world is dealing in uncertain times and navigating the additional restrictions COVID-19 has brought upon us. It has been a learning process for all. Finding ourselves in this new environment with multiple layers of pre-deployment, social isolation, family care and work balance is both challenging and amazing, to say the least. It's normal to feel added pressure to get those ducks in a row. However, oftentimes we forget our mental health plays a significant role in that process.

The current pandemic has forced our society to make drastic changes to our daily lives. We now need to care for ourselves and our family members in ways I'm sure you haven't imagined you would be, and it sure feels abnormal, doesn't it? Why? Because living through this pandemic is a trauma. Some may feel it more than others, but none the less, it's a traumatic experience.

I was asked to write about resilience during these trying times, but instead of me writing about how resilient you are, please take a moment and look at your surroundings. Look at all the things you are accomplishing while enduring trauma, while keeping in mind that accomplishment doesn't equal productivity. We're being inundated with anxiety-inducing news, with an onslaught of suggestions for making the most of our alleged extra time. Am I supposed to bake bread, clean that closet or create that color-coded home-school schedule while I'm on a conference call? The thought that we can be as focused and productive as we were a month ago is just not the case. It's difficult to be productive during a crisis. We're going through a collective traumatic experience. At the same time for some, being productive can be a coping mechanism and therapeutic during turbulent times. Acknowledging what you're feeling, placing a label on it and recognizing what you're feeling – sad, overwhelmed, fearful, anxious or angry – will allow you to function better. Name it to tame it. This is a challenging time, as we're navigating these huge emotional hurdles with uncertainty that most of us have never really experienced in our lifetime.



## A MESSAGE FROM DPH

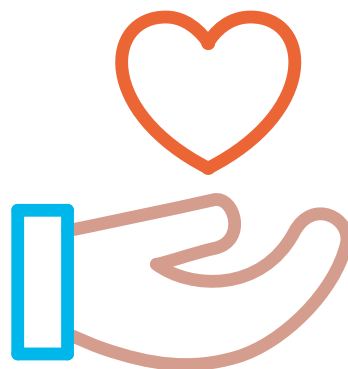
As many of you have experienced in speaking with me over the phone... You may hear my four children yelling at each other or complaining about their schoolwork, possibly dogs barking or even my husband mumbling and grumbling as he teleworks next to me. As I quickly attempt to find a quiet place to help you with my full attention, with each call I'm reminded that these circumstances are not normal. It would be abnormal to not be overwhelmed, because parts of our brain have shut down for us to survive. As a result, we are not able to fully process a lot of what is going on around us. Feeling numb and somewhat out of touch with our emotions is normal. While some are more apt to feel hypervigilant or anxious, others may become hypoactive or depressed. Neither of these means anything other than indicating your predisposition to dealing with extreme stress. That is resilience!

As members of the Idaho Air National Guard, we often forget to put ourselves first, viewing it as selfish to do so. If you ignore that change oil light on your car and slap some duct tape over it, it may be hidden for a while but it certainly comes back in big ways, and eventually the car isn't going anywhere! Please take the time to do a self-check, just as you would stop to get the oil changed in your car.

While we're amid this pandemic, we must remain mission-ready and just getting by emotionally and functionally is okay. Lower expectations, make lists/schedules, take one step at a time, one day at a time and remember that being kind to yourself is vital. Take this time to review your priorities and values, spend time with family and pets, reach out to friends, family, and colleagues via phone or video chats, and take a deep breath! Life is a practice. We are all in this together.

I'm incredibly honored and proud to be part of the Idaho Air National Guard, as the strength, comradery and spirit you have shown in a time of crisis have been remarkable to witness. If you find yourself needing assistance, know that help is available. You don't have to endure alone. As the director of psychological health, I offer free and confidential services to all members of the Idaho Air National Guard and their families. The mini horses, Calea and Drogo, are antsy to get back to work and visit with you all again. Stay healthy, be kind to yourself and wash those hands!

-Kelly Souder



To contact me, please call or text Kelly at 986-888-9360 or email me at [kelly.e.souder.civ@mail.mil](mailto:kelly.e.souder.civ@mail.mil). You may also contact your other DPH, Dr. Judy Hafner at 208-422-6747 or email her at [judy.a.hafner.civ@mail.mil](mailto:judy.a.hafner.civ@mail.mil).

# How to Protect Yourself and Others

**Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions** like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

## Know how it spreads



- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - » Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - » Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  - » These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  - » Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

## Everyone should

### Clean your hands often



- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

### Avoid close contact



- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Stay at home as much as possible.**
- **Put distance between yourself and other people.**
  - » Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.
  - » Keeping distance from others is especially important for **people who are at higher risk of getting very sick**. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>



**[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)**

## Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others



- **You could spread COVID-19 to others** even if you do not feel sick.
- **Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public**, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities.
  - » Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- **The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people** in case you are infected.
- Do **NOT** use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker.
- Continue to **keep about 6 feet between yourself and others**. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

## Cover coughs and sneezes



- **If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## Clean and disinfect



- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces** daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them:** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.



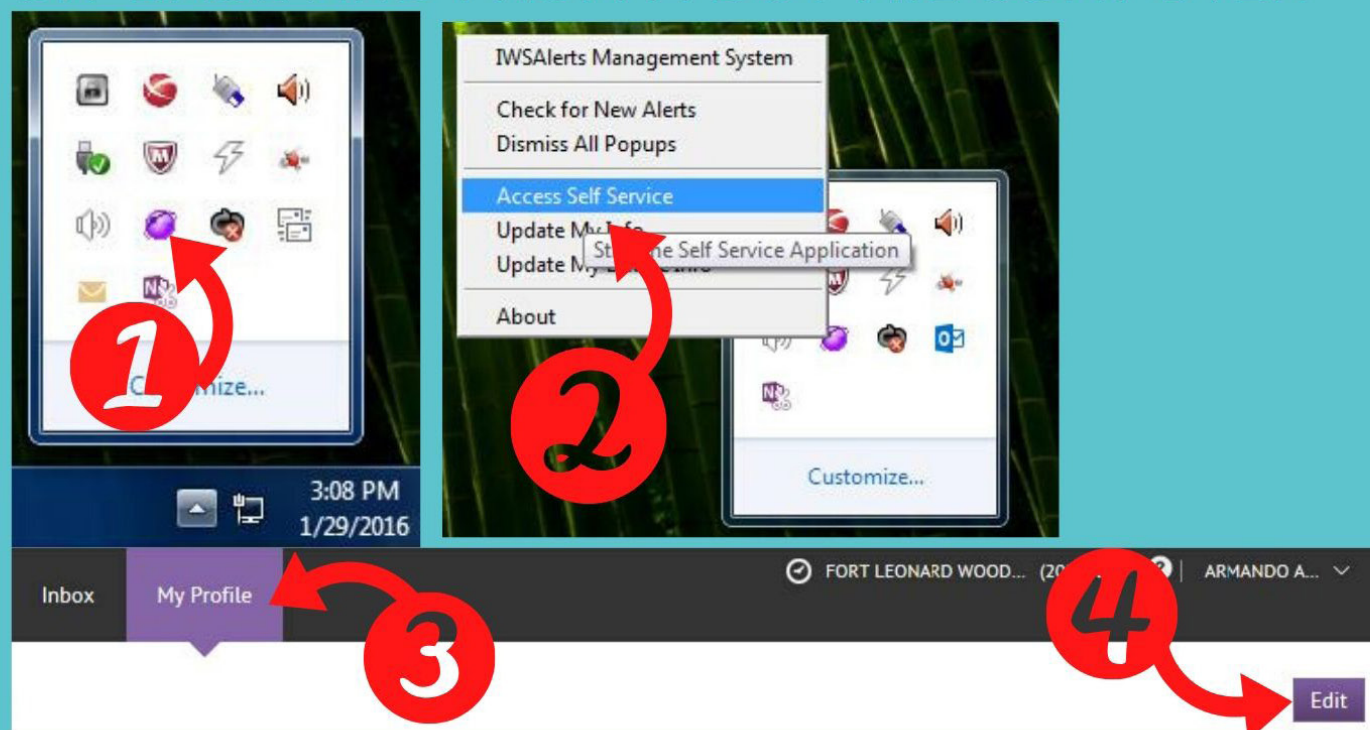
# AtHoc

KEEP A PULSE ON WHAT'S HAPPENING

AtHoc is an interactive warning and messaging system that allows senior leaders to alert you. It allows you to stay informed of both emergency notifications of on-base incidents, base warnings, and critical command messages via desktop alert, text, and email.

**IF YOU ARE NOT RECEIVING NOTIFICATIONS  
REGISTER TODAY**

ON-BASE AND FROM A DOT MIL COMPUTER



IF YOU AREN'T ON-BASE, CONTACT YOUR  
CSS AND THEY WILL REGISTER YOU.